

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

WINNER OF ARIZONA'S 1997 VOICE OF DEMOCRACY CONTEST

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1997

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Ladies Auxiliary are very active in promoting patriotism and an understanding of the values which underlie this great country of ours through its Voice of Democracy essay contest. During this past year, over 109,000 secondary school students participated in the contest, and each one of those students has a clearer understanding of the meaning of democracy as a result of their participation. The winner of this contest in my State of Arizona was David C. Pickett from Prescott Valley, AZ. David is an outstanding senior at Bradshaw Mountain High School, and his entry was sponsored by VFW Post 10227 and its ladies auxiliary. His father is a retired marine. I'm sure David's parents, as well as all of David's teachers are very proud of this young man. I'd like to share with my colleagues his winning essay.

DEMOCRACY—ABOVE AND BEYOND

1996-97 VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM—ARIZONA WINNER, DAVID PICKETT

Famine, poverty, unemployment, disease, death . . . All of these words that we'd rather not hear or even think about for an instant if we don't have to, because they all lead to mental pictures we can't bear to create or drag up from the little cobwebbed corner in the back of our minds where we try to bury all the parts of reality that frighten us most. Yet every day in dozens of countries throughout the world, people just like you and I have to deal with these dark aspects of life through any means necessary. Honest people having to steal just so their families might see the light of another day. Top of the line modern cardboard and garbage bag mansions littering the decadent alleyways of a crumbling city, and parents who'd rather take the risk of a condemned building collapsing on them than see their children die of exposure before their very eyes. Peaceful protesters are massacred or imprisoned where they die from any number of ailments while awaiting a trial that will never come. Each of these chaotic realities can be found thriving under the bannerhead of a failed system of government, whether it be fascism or socialism in any of its deceptive forms; and each of those horrific realities are precisely the reasons why those governments failed, as well as the reasons as to why democracy has risen far above and beyond them to its honored position in the world today.

When one thinks of democracy and its great leaders, pictures of great men such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin, John F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr. all come to mind. Yet when one thinks of the great leaders of communism and fascism, one can only think of people like Joseph Stalin who created a famine in the Ukraine in 1932 and '33 which resulted in the death of three-million kulaks by starvation; or even greater still was Ad-

olph Hitler who nearly brought about the complete extinction of the entire Jewish race by destroying over six-million of them through various and sundry methods of torturous execution. Or how about Benito Mussolini of Italy who came up with the term "totalitario", to describe the goals of his fascist government, as saying that his aim was "All within the state, none outside the state, and none against the state."

No other government in existence cares as much for the natural human rights of the individual, than democracy in its purest form. In America we have a Constitution and a Bill of Rights that hold the same value, if not more so, today as they did over two hundred years ago when they were first inscribed. The only thing these other governments have to show for all of their efforts is revolution after revolution after bloody revolution, and a never-ending state of misery for their people. There is no limit to democracy in America, everyone is entitled to the same share, an no one is excluded for any reason whether it be on the basis of social standing, political power, skin color, gender, or religious beliefs. Whereas in places such as South Africa during apartheid, its white citizens saw its government as a Constitutional democracy, but for its twenty two-million blacks, it was an iron-fisted dictatorship that verged on totalitarian control. Our democracy has a system of checks and balances to make sure no one person or group of people has too much control; in a totalitarian government, no such system exists, for the leader currently in power is the constitution, the law, and the government embodied in one person and one person alone. So, if you were to place all of these contrasting viewpoints on a scale weighing positives vs. negatives, freedom vs. imprisonment, and honesty vs. hypocrisy; which side would result in a better government? The answer by now should be quite obvious; the first, second, and third place medals for excellency in government go to democracy, democracy, and last but not most certainly not least: democracy.

I hope I have given you something to ponder and realize, as well as something to rekindle those possibly dwindling feelings of pride in your country's government, no make that your government. The government our ancestors started has spread like wildfire throughout the world because it is the only one that has proven itself time and time again as the greatest form of government on Earth. Three years ago in 1993, something miraculous occurred, for the first time in the history of the planet, the total number of democracies in existence outnumbered the total number of dictatorships; and I'm sure with the continuation of this trend in world thought, democracy will soon be the only government in existence, truly showing the world that is has risen above and beyond.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION TO MSGR. DANIEL J. BOURKE, GRAND MARSHAL OF THE 173D ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE IN SAVANNAH, GA

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1997

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, in honor of his dedication to preserving Irish culture, tradition, and history, Monsignor Bourke has been named grand marshal of the 173d St. Patrick's Day Parade in Savannah, GA. The parade is the cornerstone of one of the largest St. Patrick's Day celebrations in the Nation and is a fitting tribute for a man who has given so much to preserve the heritage of his native land and equally as much to the advancement of the country and city he now calls home.

HIBERNIAN SOCIETY OF SAVANNAH, GA

"Irishmen, inclined as they are by nature to good fellowship and charity, should not forget, in a foreign land, the duties they owe to themselves, their national character, and their distressed countrymen. These obligations are the more important to Irishmen, because, during the long period of their oppression, Irishmen have been useful to themselves, their country, and their brethren, only in proportion to their exercise of those generous, charitable and sterling traits with which it has pleased God to distinguish them among the people of the earth. Every motive, too, presses itself upon the heart of each true Irishman to foster more particularly unfortunate because her destiny has been unmerited, and therefore the more entitled to the tender consideration of her own sons, and of the good, the generous and the enlightened of other nationalities."

"Driven from unhappy Erin by unrelenting tyranny, afflicted and persecuted Irishmen seek an asylum in this favored republic, endeavoring to find, under the auspices of its liberal institutions, the only consolations that can remain to exiles thrust out of a beloved home by want and oppression. To these it becomes the duty of their more fortunate brethren settled in this free country, and enjoying the benefits of its hospitality, to reach out the hand of friendship, to tender the aid of a delicate charity, and to offer any other assistance which fraternal, manly and kindly feelings may inspire."

The above two paragraphs comprise the Preamble of the Hibernian Society of Savannah which was adopted at a meeting held on March 17, 1812.

The Hibernian Society of Savannah, celebrating its 185th Anniversary on March 17, 1997, would like to give special recognition to Monsignor Daniel J. Bourke who is the Grand Marshal of the 173rd St. Patrick's Day Parade in Savannah. Monsignor Bourke was born in Birr, Offaly County, Ireland on September 28, 1909. He was ordained to the priesthood at All Hallows Missionary Seminary in Dublin on June 23, 1934, for the Diocese of Savannah. He has given 63 years of dedicated service to the area of South Georgia and continues to service the needs of the people in Savannah even though he is retired and resides at Blessed Sacrament Church.

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